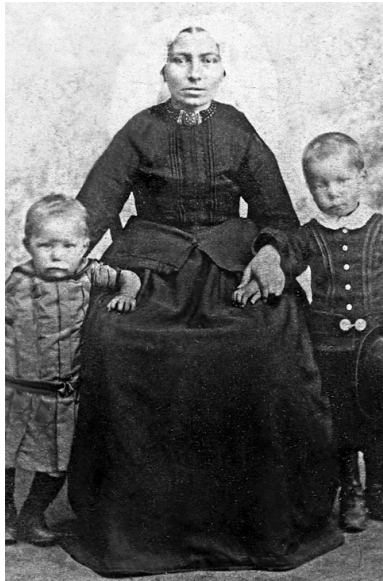


Family Stories & Photos

Teunis Romein Family



*Teunis Romijn, Netherlands,
circa 1888*



*Sijgie Romijn with Arie & Pieter,
Netherlands, circa 1888*



*Teunis & Sadie in America, with
Peter, Martin & Harry - 1890*

Teunis Romijn and Sijgie de Haan were married on April 17, 1884 in Barendrecht, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands. The Romijns had three sons: Pieter, born January 21, 1885; Arie, born May 23, 1886; and Marius, born August 20, 1889. Teunis and Sijgie immigrated to America with their young sons in 1890.

Teunis insisted the family become *Americanized* as quickly as possible. Family tradition has it Teunis changed the family's surname to *Romein* because it sounded more American. He also may have heard the name *Romein* used in the Netherlands because the surname *Romijn* is derived from the Dutch given name *Romein*, a form of the Latin name *Romanus*, meaning *Roman* or *citizen of Rome*.



*The Romein Family, circa 1910: (Standing) Peter, Martin, Harry;
(Seated) Joseph (Joe), Teunis, Sadie, Josephine (Josie)*

Teunis retained the official spelling of his given name; however, in some records, the name is misspelled as *Tunis*. Sijgie's name was changed to Sadie, Pieter to Peter, Arie to Harry, and Marius to Martin.

Initially, the family settled in Roseland, IL, a suburb of Chicago, where Joseph was born on January 17, 1893.

After three years, the family moved to South Holland, another Chicago suburb, where they lived for nine years. Josephine, the youngest child and only girl in the family, was born in South Holland on December 14, 1894. The Romein family moved to Wichert, Illinois in 1902.

Courage and Faith

It required a great deal of courage for Teunis and Sadie to make the decision to leave their home and undertake the long, arduous trip across the vast Atlantic Ocean with three young children to face an uncertain future. They had few possessions and virtually no money; however, they were pursuing their dream of making a better life in America, the Land of Opportunity. They held fast to their enduring trust in God and prayed He would provide for them. Needless to say, their faith, prayers, and determination became a wellspring of blessings that continues to course through the family to the present day.



Martin Romein

Martin's name in Dutch was Marius. Somehow, when the family's information was entered in immigration records, his name was mistakenly identified as *Martha* and he was listed as Teunis' *daughter*. The errors were recorded in the 1900 and 1910 Census reports (see below) and the misinformation was perpetuated in a number of online family trees. The correct spelling of Martin's name and gender designation appear for the first time on his marriage license. Note: Teunis' name is spelled

Tunis, the surname Romein is misspelled as *Romine* and *Romain*, and Teunis ages from 34 to 48 years old in ten years.

Matha Romine in the 1900 United States Federal Census		
Household Members	Age	Relationship
Tunis Romine	34	Head
Sadie Romine	40	Wife
Peter Romine	16	Son
Harry Romine	15	Son
Matha Romine	11	Daughter
Joe Romine	8	Son
Josie Romine	5	Daughter

Martha Romain in the 1910 United States Federal Census		
Household Members	Age	Relationship
Tunis Romain	48	Head
Sadie Romain	50	Wife
Peter Romain	25	Son
Harry Romain	24	Son
Martha Romain	20	Daughter
Joseph Romain	17	Son
Josie Romain	15	Daughter

Tracing the Romijn/Romein Family

Family records in Zuid-Holland in the Netherlands are remarkably complete, dating back to ancient times. Unfortunately, the Romijn/Romein paternal lineage can be traced only as far back as Teunis' great-grandfather, Jacob Ariese Romijn, in the mid-1700s. All records of Romein ancestors prior to that time were destroyed in a fire.

Home Builders

The three oldest Romein brothers, Peter, Harry, and Martin, were handy with saws, hammers, and nails, so they combined their skills to build homes for their parents and for their own families. They also constructed barns, sheds, garages, warehouses and other farm structures. The houses were spacious and comfortable (albeit a bit drafty) while the farm buildings were well-built and sturdy enough to withstand the test of time, to the present day. In addition, Harry taught himself how to hang wallpaper, a skill he used to finish the interior of his home.



Harry & Elizabeth's house, barn, and shed under construction, circa 1911



The house in later years with expansions and the addition of a lean-to kitchen



The house following a destructive Easter Sunday hail storm in 1950



Aerial view of the Romein farm taken by the "Kankakee Daily Journal", the area's largest newspaper, for its "Identify Your Farm" feature. Harry identified the photo and received a copy.



Left: Harry & Elizabeth's home and farm are now owned by a grandson of Harry's brother, Peter. Harry probably would have been pleased to know the home he built with his own hands and the land where he toiled so many years have remained in the family.

First-Rate Farmers

The Romein brothers were first-rate farmers. Their vegetables, wheat, corn, rye, and gladioli (called *glads*) thrived each growing season. One criterion Wichert farmers used to judge their agricultural skills was to cultivate and plant their crops in close, straight rows to utilize as much of the land as possible. Family lore has it the neighbors agreed the Romeins planted the straightest rows in Wichert.



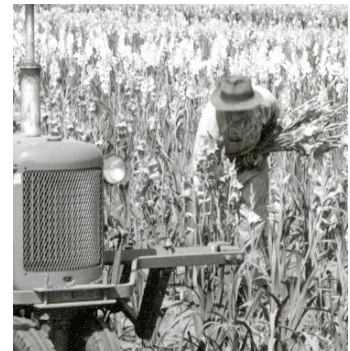
"Straight" rows of melon plants



Working with a team of horses



Over time, horses were replaced by Allis-Chalmers "horse power".



Picking glads



Powerful pumps pulled water from huge ditches to irrigate and sustain the crops during the growing season.



Gladioli bulbs were planted in the spring, dug up in the fall, and "de-rooted" and stored over the winter in crates stacked in the warehouse (right side of photo).



Joseph (Joe) Romein

Joe, Harry's youngest brother, joined the United States Army in 1918 as a member of Company A, 124th Infantry, Dixie Division, so he could fight for his country in World War I. He was sent to Camp Mills, a World War I military installation located in Mineola, Long Island,

New York. While he was waiting to be shipped to France, Joe became ill in the influenza pandemic of 1918 and he succumbed to influenza complicated by pneumonia. At the time of his death, Joe was engaged to be married to Grace Vrolyk of Wichert. He is buried in the Oakwood Cemetery in Wichert.



Arie & Cornelia DeHaan



Arie and Cornelia with their daughters, including Harry's mother, Sadie (standing left), prior to their immigration to America.

Harry's maternal grandparents, Arie and Cornelia DeHaan, are buried in the Mount Greenwood Cemetery in Roseland, Chicago, Illinois. While the record of the exact location of Cornelia's site is not available, we know both sites are unmarked. Family lore has it they were too poor to purchase grave headstones.